

**To:** StClair, Christie[StClair.Christie@epa.gov]  
**From:** Ethan Barton  
**Sent:** Mon 2/22/2016 8:32:33 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Would I be correct to say that making the area a superfund site would combat contaminants from the mines that are impacting fisheries harvested for humans, wetlands, and Canadian Lynx? Though not listed here, I also understand that the acid mine runoff has impacted fish populations. Even though the contaminants "impact fisheries that are harvested for human consumption," is there a danger to human health, given the EPA's view that the river is safe?

On Mon, Feb 22, 2016 at 3:26 PM, StClair, Christie <StClair.Christie@epa.gov> wrote:

Ethan,

The agency addressed the goals for a potential Superfund listing in its recent letter to Gov. Hickenlooper:

<http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/letter-to-gov-hickenlooper.pdf>

Let me know if that doesn't address your question well enough.

Christie

**Christie St. Clair**

Office of Public Affairs

Environmental Protection Agency

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**From:** Ethan Barton [mailto:[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)]

**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2016 3:04 PM

**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Great, thank you Christie.

One follow-up:

If the Animas and San Juan rivers are safe, then why has the EPA pushed to designate the area a superfund site?

Thanks,

Ethan

On Mon, Feb 22, 2016 at 2:59 PM, StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)> wrote:

Ethan, thanks for being so patient.

Please attribute to an agency spokeswoman:

The EPA is confident that the Animas and San Juan rivers are safe for agricultural use and long-term recreational exposure. That's because water sampling has shown that both the Animas and San Juan Rivers have returned to the same condition they were in before the GKM release.

That said, acid mine drainage has been released into the rivers for many decades and winter

runoff and major storms may kick up material that had settled to the bottom of the rivers. So those using the river for recreation, agriculture or drinking water should use the same precautions they always have.

EPA is working with city, state, county and tribal stakeholders to develop monitoring plans that will continue to assess the impacts of mine releases on the Animas and San Juan rivers. The monitoring will evaluate seasonal changes, including pre-winter and post-winter runoff and low-flow conditions.

The agency will continue to post water quality information as new data become available.

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**From:** Ethan Barton [mailto:[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)]

**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2016 12:37 PM

**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Great, thank you.

On Mon, Feb 22, 2016 at 12:35 PM, StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)> wrote:

I'm working on it, Ethan.

**Christie St. Clair**

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**From:** Ethan Barton [<mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2016 12:01 PM

**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Christie, can I expect a response soon? Thanks.

On Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 3:55 PM, Ethan Barton  
<[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)> wrote:

Monday is fine, but preferably in the morning. Thanks.

On Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 3:54 PM, StClair, Christie  
<[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)> wrote:

Deadline COB or Monday?

**Christie St. Clair**

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**From:** Ethan Barton [<mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>]

**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 3:53 PM

**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Yes, please. That would be great.

On Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 3:51 PM, StClair, Christie  
<[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)> wrote:

That's correct. I can get you some more detail if you like.

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**From:** Ethan Barton [mailto:[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)]

**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 3:43 PM

**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Animas River health

Hi Christie,

Yeah, I looked over this. My understanding is that, in essence, this says that the river is safe for use, though there are pockets with higher contamination unrelated to the Gold King Mine spill, but longterm effects require additional monitoring before conclusions can be made.

Does that sound about right?

Ethan

On Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 3:35 PM, StClair, Christie

<StClair.Christie@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Ethan,

You may find this useful – please note it is a DRAFT and will be peer reviewed before the results are finalized:  
<http://www.epa.gov/goldkingmine/epas-draft-analysis-fate-and-transport-metals-animas-and-san-juan-rivers>

Let me know if that doesn't do the trick.

Christie

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**From:** Ethan Barton  
[mailto:[ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org](mailto:ethan@dailycallernewsfoundation.org)]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 2:26 PM  
**To:** StClair, Christie <[StClair.Christie@epa.gov](mailto:StClair.Christie@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Animas River health

Hi Christie,

Hope all is well. I'm looking into the current health of the Animas River. I saw on the [FAQ page](#) that the EPA doesn't anticipate any adverse health effects to humans, livestock, or agriculture, and data on the impact on fish is promising, though long-term acid mine run-off has been detrimental to fish populations.

Could you please comment on the overall health of the Animas River in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and the Navajo Nation? I'm interested in the current quality and the long term quality, as well as the influence the Gold King Mine spill had on both of those.

I think I have a good understanding after doing extensive reading, but I'd like to be certain.

Thanks,

Ethan

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Ethan Barton

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